

# The Huffington Post

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## MMR and Autism: US court says there's a link, The MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) vaccine can cause autism, a US court has concluded.

In a secret ruling that has only just come to light, the US Court of Federal Claims has conceded that the mercury-based preservative thimerosal, which was in vaccines until 2002, caused autism in the case of one child.

The ruling is one of 4,900 cases currently being considered for compensation payments, and it is feared by health officials that it could open the floodgates for even more claims. It also appears to support the controversial findings of Dr Andrew Wakefield, who, in 1998, suggested a link between the vaccine and

autism. The ruling, made by US Assistant Attorney General Peter Keisler, was made last November, and was one of three test cases into the MMR-autism link that was being considered by a three-member panel, which Keisler chaired.

In his conclusion, Keisler said that "compensation is appropriate".

The case involved a child who, when she was 18 months old, received nine vaccinations in July 2000, two of which included

thimerosal. Within days, the girl, who had previously been healthy, suddenly exhibited no response to verbal direction, loss of language skills, no eye contact, insomnia, incessant screaming, and arching.

A diagnosis of autism was confirmed seven months later.

In its defence, the US government said the girl had a pre-existing mitochondrial disorder that was aggravated by the vaccine.

(Source: The Huffington Post, February 25, 2008).